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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 002587

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STATE FOR NEA/ARPI

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KU](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [KUWAIT](#) [IRAN](#) [RELATIONS](#) [KUWAIT](#) [IRAQ](#) [RELATIONS](#)
SUBJECT: PM SENIOR ADVISOR SAYS IRAQ TOP PRIORITY,
AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN UNLIKELY

REF: A. STATE 107980

[B.](#) KUWAIT 2551

[C.](#) KUWAIT 2548

[D.](#) KUWAIT 2229

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

[¶](#)1. (C) Summary: During a June 11 meeting which focused largely on Kuwait's relations with regional neighbors, Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister Mohammed Abulhassan told the Ambassador that Prime Minister Shaykh Sabah, who left June 11 for Riyadh, was attempting to break stalemates between Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states by encouraging some practical steps forward. On Iraq, Abulhassan responded to the Ambassador's call for the reestablishment of diplomatic ties by noting that the issue had been raised previously and was on the Prime Minister's agenda. Abulhassan also said that the June 4-6 visit of the Secretary General of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Dr. Hassan Rouhani had produced little of substance other than general agreements to continue to work towards the resolution of disputes over the continental shelf and related gas fields. Abulhassan said it was unlikely Kuwait and Iran would come to agreement on these or any other issues during the remainder of Iranian President Khatami's term, but would instead wait until a new president took office. End Summary.

PM Urging GCC to Resolve Differences

[¶](#)2. (C) The Ambassador met with Senior Advisor to the Prime Ministerial, former Information Minister and former UN PermRep Mohammed Abulhasan on June 11 (ref. B). Abulhasan began by discussing the Prime Minister's scheduled June 11 visit to Riyadh. Abulhasan said the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) "hides real issues through courtesy" and accordingly now finds its member states deadlocked by disagreements. He said PM Shaykh Sabah was asked by others in the GCC to help calm relations between Saudi Arabia and its neighbors, in this case Qatar, U.A.E. and Bahrain.

Iraq Relationship Top Priority for GOK

[¶](#)3. (C) The Ambassador raised the issue of Kuwaiti-Iraqi diplomatic relations (ref. A), noting that the U.S. was pleased that Iraqi Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Hamad Al-Bayati's June 9 visit to Kuwait -- during which a general agreement on the exchange of embassies was signed -- had been productive. Reiterating the message he had previously relayed to the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabah (refs. B and D, respectively) the Ambassador said the U.S. was anxious to see a Kuwaiti Ambassador to Iraq appointed, and offered U.S. assistance in working through any security matters related to the establishment of a Kuwaiti Embassy in Baghdad. Abulhasan said the GOK had given its relationship with Iraq priority, and, pointing out that Kuwait had received Iraqi officials "almost every week," said the reestablishment of diplomatic relations was on the Prime Minister's agenda.

Visit of Iranian Advisor Bears Little Fruit

[¶](#)4. (C) On the June 4-6 visit of the Secretary General of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Dr. Hassan Rouhani, Abulhasan said there had been little progress on bilateral issues. Abulhasan said Iran was eager to finish the demarcation of the continental shelf and its related gas fields. Citing clear differences of opinion regarding these issues and the June 12 election in which Iran will elect a new president, Abulhasan said he is doubtful that any progress would be made until a new President is sworn in. When asked about possible water and gas deals, Abulhasan was equally pessimistic. He also made it clear that the GOK saw little to be gained now by dealing with "lame duck" Khatami and would rather see Rafsanjani get credit for any improvement in relations.

Iranians Claim Nuclear Power For Peaceful Purposes

[¶](#)5. (C) Abulhasan said Rouhani had touched upon the issue of

Iranian negotiations with the Europeans over Iran's nuclear activities, emphasizing that Iran sought nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only. Reminding his Kuwaiti interlocutors that Iran had cooperated with the IAEA, Abulhasan said Rouhani pledged that Iran would not embark on "illegal activities." Abulhasan said the GOK's position vis-a-vis Iran's nuclear activities was to continue support for Iranian negotiations with the Europeans. He said the GOK had told Rouhani it was not only the Europeans and Americans who had questions about Iran's nuclear program, but also the IAEA.

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